



# ILLINOIS FAMILIES Now and Forever

Families by Foster Care, Adoption and Guardianship®

Department of Children and Family Services®



## From the DCFS Director

Bryan Samuels

"The mind is a terrible thing to waste" is a popular phrase that still holds true, especially for children who are victims of maltreatment. How difficult it must be for young people to concentrate on education when faced with significant family issues. As a foster parent, you can provide the stable and supportive home environment that opens doors to education and helps children across the threshold to more life opportunities.

As an agency, DCFS understands that you, too, need support as you help the child in your care. Thus, DCFS recently developed a new tool, the Education Passport, to collect education information and keep it organized in each child's official case record. Now the caseworker, foster parent and teacher have vital information to help children move through educational systems with limited interruptions.

Nothing takes the place of committed foster parents working directly with teachers, attending school functions and assisting with homework. I appreciate your efforts. Together with the child's caseworker, you clear the way and point children in the right direction so they can grow to choose their own path.

## Caregivers have to pay close attention to special ed changes

This month new legislation on education for children with disabilities became official. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, known as IDEA 2004, will impact all youth who receive special education accommodations as outlined in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Several time frames and processes have changed. Foster and adoptive parents will need to be even more diligent with documentation and holding schools to the letter of the law.

Following is a snapshot of some of the changes that caregivers may have to work through as they advocate for youth. The DCFS Education Advisors, as well as Education Liaisons at private agencies, can offer more details and support parents in working with school staff.

### Developing the IEP

Sometimes, school transfers cannot be avoided, and foster parents have to be the go-between during the transition. The new IDEA gives the student and parent more leverage. If a cross-district transfer occurs, now the new district must

provide comparable services from the existing IEP until it is adopted or a new IEP is developed and implemented.

Sitting at the staffing while a teacher fills out endless forms can be tedious. The new policy attempts to minimize that. To that end, the short-term objectives that measure the student's progress toward each goal in the IEP are no longer required for all but a small percentage of students with significant cognitive disabilities. This could mean that the IEP would not spell out specific milestones. Even though it is not required, caregivers can still ask that the team spell out specific objectives to assess progress throughout the year. Additionally, the old policy called for schools to inform parents if the child's progress was sufficient to actually meet the objectives. With the new law, schools provide periodic progress reports. The downside to this approach is that a student could be progressing and still miss the mark at the end of the year, too late for intervention.

*Continued on page 2*

## special ed, con't.

### Discipline

The 2004 IDEA made several changes that could allow students to miss learning at the current school because of discipline issues. Under the old provisions, the school could remove a student with a disability to “an alternative education setting” for a serious offense involving weapons or drugs. With the 2004 revision, that provision has been expanded to include serious bodily injury against another. The removal was for a maximum 45 days. Now it has been updated to 45 *school* days, which could result in the student being out of the current school longer. While the child is at the interim setting, the school now must provide services that allow students to *progress toward* meeting the goals, rather than *enable* them to meet the goals.

The nature of the behavior and its cause will also be under more scrutiny with the new policy. If a behavior is determined to be a manifestation of a disability, then the school cannot expel or exclude a child from school for more than 10 days. This conclusion must come from a meeting called the Manifestation Determination Review. The new IDEA wraps more specific language around how that determination is made. To avoid expulsion, the conduct must “be caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child’s disability...” or was the “direct result” of the school’s failure to implement the IEP. Only “relevant” IEP team

members have to be at the Manifestation Determination Review. Understanding a child’s behavior is already difficult. Now caregivers and staff will have a higher burden of proof to keep a student in the school setting.

### Resolving Disputes

When there is a dispute over a child’s educational rights, parents can file a due process complaint. Under the new rules, the process has changed somewhat. When parents file a due process report, the school district must now file a response within 10 days. But if the district challenges the parent’s claim, it has 15 days to notify the state hearing officer. Then the hearing officer has five more days to make a finding.

Before getting to the due process hearing, parents have to attend a mandatory “resolution session.” This session will be held within 15 days of filing the complaint. The school district has 30 days from filing to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the parents. Only after that can a due process hearing take place. These new time frames and the additional resolution session mean that caregivers have to pay close attention to the calendar and keep pressing for resolution.

The 2004 IDEA is a complex, and important piece of educational policy. Future Educational Advocacy trainings will incorporate the new changes. In the meantime, the Educational Advisors are available to help.

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## Sign on some dotted lines

As school gets underway, stacks of papers will come home stuffed in book bags waiting for an adult's signature. For children in DCFS foster care, there are guidelines about what a foster parent can sign. Foster parents are authorized and encouraged to sign consents for general school-related activities, including but not limited to:

- Field trips within Illinois
- Routine special events (picnics, school parties, etc.)
- School enrollment
- Attendance at sporting events
- Extra-curricular activities (excluding participation in sports)
- Cultural events
- Case study evaluations
- Individualized Education Plan
- Three year re-evaluations of special education services

Foster parent are **not** authorized to sign consent for the following activities. Instead they must contact the caseworker when consent is needed for:

- Athletic participation
- Media coverage/events
- Slide show productions
- Voice reproductions
- Research projects
- Field trips outside of Illinois
- Liability releases
- Medical exams or care

## Plan for physicals and NOW dental exams

In the flurry of forms that go along with the start of a new school year, the physicals are one of the most asked for. This year schools will also be looking for a dental exam for certain grades as well.

The state of Illinois requires school children to have a current physical (within the past year) and to be current with immunizations if they are:

- Entering school for the first time at any age
- Are or will be five years old when entering Kindergarten
- Entering the fifth grade
- Entering the ninth grade

As of July 2002 there is a requirement for children entering kindergarten or first grade to be immunized against chicken pox/varicella.

A lead screening is required for young children entering daycare, Preschool and Kindergarten.

Original copies of the Certificate of Child Health Examination, completed and signed by the physician, should be given to the school nurse where the child is enrolled. Don't forget to give a copy to the child's caseworker and to keep a copy for your own records. Children who do not have a current physical or shots by October 15, according to state law, will not be allowed to attend school until the record is updated.

New as of July 2005, state law requires that Illinois children in



Kindergarten, second and sixth grades have dental examinations by a licensed dentist. This includes all students attending public, private or parochial schools. Each parent must present proof of examination before May 15 of the current school year. If not, the school may hold second and sixth grade report cards until the parent provides proof that the exam took place or will happen within 60 days of May 15.

Each school must give notice of the requirement to the parents or guardians at least 60 days before May 15 each school year. The Department of Public Health is establishing rules to handle exemptions for religious grounds or other constraints. Call the Office of Health Policy at 217-557-2689 with questions about exams or immunizations.



## Top Foster Care Implementation Plans finish with record scores

When legislators passed the Foster Parent Law in 1995 one hope was that foster parents would see results from requiring each agency and DCFS region providing foster care services to submit an annual Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan. A decade later, no one could have guessed the results from this year. After the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council reviewed the plans and tallied the scores, the high score was 103.98— just two one-hundredths from 104 possible points. The spread among the top five scores was less than half a point, and there was a tie for the fifth place.

“The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council takes the job of reviewing implementation plans seriously and the agencies are apparently taking the plans serious, too,” said Chair Adrienne Welenc.

The private agencies and the DCFS region that garnered the top scores joined the May 20 Council meeting to receive congratulations and thanks from DCFS Director Bryan Samuels and the Council members. On hand to accept the award for scoring among the top five were:

- **FIRST PLACE** – Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rockford, 103.98 points
- **SECOND PLACE** – Beatrice Caffrey Youth Services, Chicago, 103.88 points

- **THIRD PLACE** – DCFS Cook North Region, Chicago, 103.80 points
- **FOURTH PLACE** – Hephzibah Children’s Association, Oak Park, 103.78 points
- **FIFTH PLACE tie** – Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago, 103.67 points
- **FIFTH PLACE tie** – The Youth Campus, Park Ridge, 103.67 points



*DCFS Cook North Region:  
John Horwath, Amie Joof,  
Adrienne Welenc (Chair),  
Chris McGrath, Mike Barry, DCFS  
Director Bryan Samuels, Mattie  
Brown (Foster Parent), Jackie Bright*



*Beatrice Caffrey Youth Services:  
Adrienne Welenc (Chair),  
April Johnson, DCFS Director Bryan  
Samuels, Mark Bouie, Debra McGee*



*The Youth Campus:  
Deborah Pinkett, DCFS Director  
Bryan Samuels, Barbara Jean  
Turner (Foster Parent),  
Adrienne Welenc (Chair)*

The strongest plans typically demonstrate obvious links between the foster families and the agency staff to increase communication and responsiveness. The DCFS Cook North Region prepares its plan by holding multiple sessions with foster parents at its three major sites. The caregivers go over the previous year’s plan and make recommendations for changes. At Beatrice Caffrey Youth Services, staff and administrators use the implementation plan as a governing document to guide impartial decision-making. Supervisors, case managers and licensing representatives all work on the plan throughout its development and evaluation, with foster parents serving as part of the team. The Youth Campus developed a “TYC Spirit of Teamwork Foster Parent Law Grievance Procedure” that truly includes the foster parents as they work together to resolve issues.

Plans can also stand out for unique ways they support foster families. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rockford offers counseling for the family in addition to the child in care. Hephzibah focuses on foster family strengths, and builds upon them so that caregivers can stay committed even in tough situations and increase placement stability. Caregivers and staff get to see the other's perspective



*Catholic Charities, Rockford:  
Vivian Willemsen, Adrienne  
Welenc (Chair), Geoff Franklin,  
DCFS Director Bryan Samuels,  
Colleen Heffernan*



*Hephzibah: Rachel Ash, DCFS  
Director Bryan Samuels, Julie  
Dvorsky, Juanita Broscheit (Foster  
Parent), Adrienne Welenc (Chair)*



*Catholic Charities, Chicago:  
DCFS Director Bryan Samuels,  
Olivia Brown (Foster Parent),  
Heidi Darville, Adrienne Welenc  
(Chair), Mary Sue Meshes, Sylvia  
Florey, Vickie Stewart*

through joint trainings at Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

There is no such thing as a perfect plan even if it comes close to a perfect score. However, the plan is a good indicator of how the foster care program adheres to the rights and responsibilities outlined in the Foster Parent Law. While the law requires that agencies do plan, there is a lot that must happen behind the scenes. The Office of Foster Parent Support Services is the "point of entry" to collect and prepare the plans for the review. The Council members score each plan three times. Then they tally the results and prepare comments for the agencies. The time for celebration is short-lived, because the Council is already gearing up for the next round of plans and continuing to monitor agencies' progress in upholding their plans.

## Movin' On Up

*This feature column provides news to help youth transition to adulthood...*

Are you an adolescent ready for independence? Take the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment and find out the skills you have and what you need to know before you leave the "nest."

Every youth in foster care or residential programs should do a life skills assessment before turning 14, 16 and prior to leaving the system. Ask your caseworker to get you set up to see just how much you know.

### Education Vouchers

Office of Education and Transition Services renewed the Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV) to assist youth with educational expenses. The voucher is for a one-time payment up to \$5,000 to fund educational expenses, tuition, room and board, books and supplies not covered by financial aid.

To be eligible for the program youth must:

- Be 16 - 23 years old
- Attend a public/private four-year university, junior college, or a one-year vocational training program (in or out of state)
- Have moved to adoption or guardianship after age 16.

For more information, contact the Office of Education and Transition Services at 309-693-5150.

# Supervision is the key to preventing accidental drowning deaths

## Get water wise... SUPERVISE!

One Illinois infant drowned in less than six inches of water when his parent walked away to answer the phone. Another toddler drowned when she fell headfirst into a five-gallon bucket partially filled with water.

In 2004, there were 18 accidental drowning deaths in Illinois. Education and adult supervision could have prevented these deaths.

Children cannot be left unattended around water even for one moment without the possibility of something tragic happening. "Get Water Wise...Supervise" is the name of a statewide campaign being promoted by a coalition of public and private agencies including the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois, The American Red Cross, and the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Drowning can occur in seconds in small amounts of water in pools, bathtubs and buckets. Parents need to lock access to pools, empty buckets and baby pools when they are not in use and make sure there are enough adults to adequately supervise the number of children around water. It is important to teach children to stay away from water

until an adult is present and to teach children to swim.

Please use the following safety tips to help protect children from water-related tragedy in the summer months and all year long.

### Swimming pools:

- Keep ladders, patio furniture and toys away from above-ground pools. Toddlers are better climbers than you might think!
- Fence in pool and lock the gate. Pool covers and alarms provide added protection.
- Young children should wear or use personal flotation devices, but remember that these devices do not replace adult supervision. They could deflate or slip from underneath a child, leaving him in a dangerous situation.
- Remind babysitters and other caretakers not to leave children unattended near or in water.
- Appoint an adult who can swim to watch kids during pool parties.
- Learn CPR and keep rescue equipment, a telephone and emergency numbers near all pools. Seconds count when it comes to preventing death or serious injury.

### Baby pools:

- Don't be lulled into a false sense of security because of the shallowness of baby pools.

Did you know that a small child could drown in as little as two inches of water? Children should always be supervised when they are in a baby pool.

- Empty the pool immediately after use and store it upside-down.

### Bathtubs:

- Never leave a young child alone in a bathtub.
- Don't rely on a bathtub seat for safety.
- Don't allow children to play alone in bathrooms.

### Buckets:

- Remember that five-gallon buckets of water pose a threat to babies and toddlers who may topple into them while playing and be unable to free themselves.
- Empty and store all buckets out of children's reach.

### 2003 - 2004 Accidental Child Drowning Deaths in Illinois

In 2003, there were 15 accidental drowning deaths:

- 7 in swimming pools
- 5 in a river, lake or pond
- 1 in a bathtub
- 1 in a bucket
- 1 in a quarry

In 2004, there were 18 accidental drowning deaths:

- 11 in swimming pools
- 1 in a river
- 3 in a bathtub
- 1 in a septic tank
- 1 in a ditch
- 1 in a quarry



A tear-out-and-save guide

Teacher handout

# ADOPTION IN THE CLASSROOM



## Preschool

- Simply mention the words "adoption" or "adopted" occasionally as you talk about babies and families or tell stories.
- Enter into, or initiate, role plays about getting ready for the arrival of an adopted child, going to the airport to meet a new child, or going to court to have the adoption finalized.
- Choose stories to read which mention adoption.
- Make sure that the pictures and books in the classroom reflect the world's diversity.

## Later Elementary

- Be sensitive to the fact that children of this age generally want to fit in and be the same as other children. They are unlikely to want to be singled out because they are adopted.
- Present the Family Tree exercise with several alternatives for the whole class, describing how adopted children have chosen to make their trees in the past.
- Mention that many famous people are adoptees: Moses, former President Gerald Ford, Stephen Jobs, Nelson Mandela, John Lennon, even Superman.

## Early Elementary

- Read stories that are about adoption, as well as ones that mention adoption in passing.
- As you discuss different kinds of families, always mention adoptive families.
- If a student in the class has a baby born into their family, use this as an opportunity to mention that some children join families through adoption.
- Consider a class activity for National Adoption Awareness Month (November), such as having an adoptive parent visit.
- Be aware of potential confusion when the word "adoption" is used in connection with animals or fundraisers. Suggest that a different theme be used—instead of Adopt a Book, try Befriend a Book; instead of "adopting" an animal at a shelter, talk of "finding an owner."

## Middle & High School

- Suggest adoption as one of the themes for essay or journal writing. Allow students to explore their feelings.
- Introduce family history assignments sensitively, mentioning alternatives for everyone and noting that some students may not have access to their birth relatives, due to divorce, death, adoption, or for other reasons.
- Mention adoption in science class in connection with genetic studies, noting those traits, skills, and characteristics which are inherited and those which are acquired.
- In family life and sex education classes, discuss families formed by adoption. Explain adoption as a choice for people who face an unplanned pregnancy. Use positive adoption language and encourage students to do so.
- If a student says, "I don't see how anyone could place a child for adoption," talk about adoption as a loving choice.



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## Join the Illinois Statewide Adoption Family Album

Your family photo could become part of the State's largest scrapbook. As part of the Illinois Celebrates Adoption effort, adoptive families can submit a photo of their family that may be used during National Adoption Day events in November. Also, plans may include gatherings of adoptive families in Chicago and other major cities in the state. Contact the editor if you would like to be part of a celebration this fall.

E-mail a **digital** photo to [vjames@idcfs.state.il.us](mailto:vjames@idcfs.state.il.us). The message should include:

- Names of family members as pictured
- Your address and daytime phone number
- **One sentence** describing the most memorable part of your adoption experience.

Prints can be sent to Vanessa James, DCFS, 100 W. Randolph 6<sup>th</sup> fl., Chicago IL 60601. On the back of the photograph write:

- Names of family members as pictured
- Address and daytime phone number
- **One sentence** describing the most memorable part of your adoption experience.

Photographs will not be returned. Pictures must not include any children with open DCFS cases. The deadline is September 30, 2005.

## Wednesday's Child ends with success

Each Wednesday for six years a child has had an opportunity to fulfill a dream of finding a forever family. Chicago's NBC5-TV with evening news anchor Allison Rosati helped millions of viewers learn about the need for adoption in general and the brave children who go on TV in hope of a family. Since the program began in July 1999, 265 children have been featured. Last month, the last Wednesday's Child segment went on air, bringing a bittersweet ending to the successful recruitment project in Illinois.

"Wednesday's Child has been a wonderful experience. When we started, in any month there could be 1,000 waiting children who needed this kind of recruitment. After six years this program can wind down, since everyone has done such a good job of finding positive outcomes for children," said Bridgett Glickman, Wednesday's Child Program Coordinator.

Wednesday's Child was a very special recruiting resource for DCFS. Because it harnessed the power of TV, only a segment of cases were at a point in the legal proceedings to take advantage of it. Additionally, television was not the right fit for every child. But for those who youth who signed on to do a segment, it could be a life-changing experience.

The Freddie Mac Foundation and NBC5 as program sponsors made certain all the Wednesday's children had great memories. Glickman and Janise Alston, Wednesday's Child Family Advo-



*Bridgett Glickman, Janise Alston and Allison Rosati share a moment with Wednesday's Child Thomas*

cate, helped the youth become prepared and comfortable. The team produced segments that allowed children to shine because they were doing the things they loved. Dontae, two years after his adoption, still watches the videotape of his time in the spotlight as the "Ring Master" of the Ringling Brother's circus. One Wednesday's Child flew a plane with a professional pilot. Another took a turn as DJ on popular radio program.

These once in a lifetime experiences were the icing on the cake for the 90 children who moved to adoption or guardianship after appearing on Wednesday's Child. Additionally, 82 are currently placed with families and moving toward permanency.

The end of Wednesday's Child here does not mean the end to recruiting. The Wednesday's Child model is still active in other television markets around the country. In Illinois, there are still 18,000 youth in care, many of whom need a permanent family. DCFS is working on many recruitment efforts. Stay tuned.





## Adoption Advisory Council sets sights for better staff support and more resources

The Illinois Adoption Advisory Council (AAC) presented DCFS Director Samuels a memo outlining the group's priority issues and proposal to address them. The Council members are looking forward to collaborating with DCFS leadership.

### Adoption Advisory Council Priorities:

#### Enhancing pre- and post-adoption training for DCFS and private agency staff

- Train public and private agency staff as adoption specialists with standardized job descriptions and responsibilities for the child and family.
- Renew training practice approaches that were effective but no longer exist.

#### Increasing available pre- and post-adoption community resources

- Strengthen relationships with private agencies that have pre- and post-adoption expertise.
- Take a more active role working with the community to develop necessary adoption services.
- Work with AAC to develop an adoption resource newsletter and update the post adoption resource guide.
- Update the Post Adoption and Guardianship Services booklet annually and distribute to all families that adopt or become guardians of DCFS wards.

- Consider the Adoption Information Center of Illinois to manage the current database on the DCFS website that was designed to list services relevant to post adoptive families in Cook County.
- Work with AAC to secure a federal Adoption Opportunities Program discretionary grant to develop a state-wide adoption clearinghouse and/or provide technical assistance and training on current special-needs adoption issues.

#### Addressing identified post-adoption service gaps statewide

- Develop increased availability of psychiatric, dental/orthodontic and neurological services statewide
- Coordinate with the Department of Public Aid to ensure Medicaid mental health services are accessible throughout the state or contract with appropriate providers to eliminate service delivery gaps.

Since the March memo, the Council reported progress in many areas.

### Training/Staffing

Adoption Core Training curriculum is being refreshed. The AAC has reviewed the new draft curriculum, and is looking forward to the pending rollout this summer. Additionally, as of July,



*Elizabeth  
Richmond,  
co-chair*



*Jim Jones,  
co-chair*

DCFS adoption caseworkers will return to that role with new job descriptions allowing them to focus more on adoption specific casework.

### Services and Resources

The AAC is working with DCFS to identify grants to fund adoption needs. Several council members are already researching a Wisconsin proposal to develop regional post-adoption resource centers.

During Fiscal Year 2006, the Adoption Advisory Council will meet:

- August 12, 2005, Bloomington
- October 7, 2005, Springfield
- November 18, 2005, Chicago
- February 3, 2006, Bloomington
- April 7, 2006, Springfield
- June 2, 2006, Chicago

These are open meetings, and everyone is welcome. For more information or to confirm your attendance, contact the Office of Foster Parent Support Services at 217-524-2422.

## Tell it like it is: Readers respond

Families Now and Forever wants to hear the “real deal” on caring for children from those who know best. Here’s how readers responded to the question: **What was one school-related experience with your child that gave you the most grief or gratification?**

“My 16-year-old foster son has been talking about driving. I don’t want to see him denied a chance to be like other kids even if the whole idea of him driving makes me nervous. So, I brought it up at his IEP. They did not have him scheduled to take it next year. They agreed to schedule him to take the classroom portion next year and then said they would have someone take him out and assess him. I felt good about this because learning to drive is important for his life skills and it is giving him a chance to get his license anyway.”

*(via e-mail)*

“My grief was in getting the right school to meet my foster daughter’s needs. I really don’t believe DCFS has a successful strategy for getting kids in schools. Good schools happen only if a foster parent fought for it or it happened by accident. DCFS should “own” spots at the best public schools. I ended up paying for a private school to make sure her needs were met. That’s financial suicide for someone adopting with retirement approaching. But it had to be done.”

*Collette, foster parent, Chicago*

“When my son was in first grade (he is now in 4th grade) the children were to bring a parent to school to talk about what the parent did. My son asked me to not only talk about foster care, but he wanted all his classmates to know how he came to be in our family. I was so proud of him! I was also very excited that he was so comfortable with being adopted! To this day, he does not hesitate to let people know he was adopted.”

*P.C., via e-mail*

No one at the IEP thought my daughter should have an aide for kindergarten next year. So, I requested an additional speech assessment, then I called Mitch Kremer, DCFS Educational Advocate, and Mark Tingler. With all 9 of us at the table for a nearly TWO HOUR IEP meeting, my daughter has an aide. I would want to encourage other foster parents that, persistence pays, that the educational advocates are a GREAT resource.”

*Maripat, adoptive mom*

The new question is... **What was your last child welfare problem and how was it successfully resolved?**

You can contact me with your response by e-mail at [vjames@idcfs.state.il.us](mailto:vjames@idcfs.state.il.us) or by phone at 312-814-6824. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Vanessa James, Editor



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**Purpose:** To help busy families more effectively parent children currently or formerly in DCFS care. To bring them the best information from the most knowledgeable sources. To promote statewide teamwork in finding permanency for children.

**Address Changes:** Families must notify their licensing representative, who will notify DCFS. Agencies should change office addresses or request staff copies through the Editor.

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## A family for me

**Brianna [7067]** Brianna, 12, loves to take care of animals – she'll even look after stuffed animals when no real ones are around! She hopes to join a family that has a dog or cat so she can learn more about being a good caretaker. When she has free time, Brianna likes to put a Disney CD in her stereo, so she can sing along to their classic songs (she knows all the words). She also enjoys being outside, especially when she can swim or play basketball.

Brianna's foster parent and her teacher said they enjoy spending time with her. She has a great sense of humor and likes to do activities with adults. The family for Brianna could provide her with lots of love and attention. You can be reassuring and emotionally supportive in your parenting style. She will do best in a family follows a regular routine.

**Emmy [6341]** Emmy, 16, is a talented artist who loves to draw pictures of houses. She signs each one and often gives them to friends as gifts. Away from the drawing table, she likes to listen to CDs from the Backstreet Boys and Usher. Emmy has lots of energy and is always eager to go swimming or bowling. At school, she is outgoing and likes to participate in classroom activities. While she has some vision impairments, she hasn't let this stop her from pursuing her interest in art.

Emmy's teachers said she is a loveable young lady who is eager to learn. She works well independently and in groups. A parent to Emmy would be loving and supportive. You can help her remain in contact with her brother and grandmother. Emmy wants to join a "nice" family that likes to go to church, the swim-ming pool, and the shopping mall.

**Timothy [6027]** Timothy, 15, is a sweet, gentle young man. He laughs easily and is kind to everyone he meets. He loves to be active, and his favorite sports are basketball and baseball. Timothy also enjoys music and has a remarkable talent for memorizing music videos. He can even duplicate the dance moves he sees in them. While he's generally on the quiet side, Timothy loves playing with friends and being part of a group. He has a positive attitude and is very affectionate.

His foster parents said Timothy is very helpful and considerate of others. His teachers said he is fun to have in class. Potential parents for Timothy would be able to provide lots of love and attention. You could also support his interests in music and sports. Timothy is very close with his brother and would like to stay in touch with him after joining an adoptive family.

**Allen [7371]** Allen (also known as Josh) is an outgoing young man at 11! He makes friends easily and no

doubt impresses them with his many creative talents. He likes to draw pictures and write stories; he enjoys cooking and trying out new recipes; he is an enthusiastic singer who loves karaoke; and he hopes to take dance lessons some day. When he's not expressing himself creatively, Josh likes to participate in gymnastics.

His teacher said Josh works hard in school and likes to keep busy. His worker said Josh is good at communicating his thoughts and feelings.

**Zachary [7504]** Zachary, 2, is a well-behaved little boy with a calm and peaceful personality. Although he doesn't speak, he enjoys being around other people, especially if he is being held or cuddled. When he's not in someone's arms, Zachary likes to play with toys that make music, or he simply relaxes and watches the world around him. At meal time, Zachary receives food through a feeding tube. He also receives medications through a catheter to help with his medical conditions.

His foster parent said Zachary is a loveable little boy. His worker said Zachary adjusts well to new people and situations. The family for Zachary would provide him with lots of love and attention. He would do best in a family that has at least one stay-at-home parent who can devote plenty of time to his care.

**If you are interested in adopting one of these children or learning about other children waiting to be adopted, please call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois at 1-800-572-2390, or see the AICI web site – [www.adoptinfo-il.org](http://www.adoptinfo-il.org).**



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Call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois 800-572-2390.

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